

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-10

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-----017293 142206Z /73/46

R 121748Z JAN 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY MBABANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 008601

(CORRECTED COPY LINE 5 PARA 4 OMITTED)
E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, PDEV, BC

SUBJECT: FY 78 SECURITY SUPPORTING ASSISTANCE TO BOTSWANA

1. SUMMARY: DEPARTMENT AND AID/W FULLY ENDORSE EMBASSY'S VIEW THAT IT IS IMPORTANT TO SUPPORT BOTSWANA'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT, THE DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF REGIONAL CONFLICTS BY MAINTAINING FY 78 SECURITY SUPPORTING ASSISTANCE AT A MEANINGFUL LEVEL. AS EMBASSY HAS OBSERVED, THE KEY TO THIS NOW APPEARS TO BE OBLIGATION AND EFFECTIVE USE OF THE UP TO DOLS 10 MILLION EARMARKED FOR THE TRANSPORT SECTOR.
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THIS JOINT STATE/AID CABLE SUGGESTS A COURSE OF ACTION WHICH TAKES ACCOUNT OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL'S FARAH REPORT CONCERNING THE UNUSUAL FINANCIAL BURDEN PLACED ON GOB AS RESULT OF RHODESIA BORDER PROBLEMS AND INFLUX OF REFUGEES, AND REQUESTS USAID AND EMBASSY ASSISTANCE IN PREPARING DOCUMENTATION. IT HAS BEEN CLEARED WITH AMBASSADOR NORLAND. END SUMMARY.

2. BOTH AID/W AND THE DEPARTMENT BELIEVE THE IBRD WILL NEED MORE TIME TO ORGANIZE A CONSORTIUM OF DONORS FOR THE RAILROAD PROJECT THAN REMAINS IN THE CURRENT FISCAL YEAR, AND THAT APPROPRIATION OF U.S. FUNDS TO THIS PROJECT IN FY 78 IS LIKELY TO PROVE IMPOSSIBLE. IN ORDER TO PREVENT THIS SITUATION FROM RESULTING IN AN ARBITRARY REDUCTION IN OVERALL AID TO BOTSWANA IN FY 78, AID/W IS WILLING TO EXAMINE AN ALTERNATIVE USE OF EARMARKED TRANSPORT SECTOR FUNDS BY EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITY OF PROVIDING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR LOCAL COST EXPENDITURES. THIS WOULD BE DESIGNED TO HELP OFFSET THE PRESSURE ON THE GOB'S OWN DEVELOPMENT BUDGET STEMMING FROM UNUSUAL ECONOMIC HARDSHIPS CONFRONTING THE GOB DUE TO CONTINUING UNREST AND INCIDENTS ON BOTSWANA'S BORDERS. BECAUSE OF THESE PROBLEMS THE GOB APPARENTLY INTENDS TO DIVERT DEVELOPMENT FUNDS FROM ONGOING AND PLANNED DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS TO UNANTICIPATED AND UNBUDGETED BORDER SECURITY AND REFUGEE PROJECTS. THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL'S FARAH REPORT (MARCH 1977) ESTIMATED DOLS 16.3 MILLION FROM THE CAPITAL BUDGET AND DOLS 3.4 MILLION ANNUALLY FROM THE RECURRENT BUDGET WILL BE DIVERTED TO SECURITY ACTIVITIES IN BOTSWANA IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE LIVES AND PROPERTY OF BOTSWANA NATIONALS. THE EXACT AMOUNT AVAILABLE FOR AID ASSISTANCE WILL DEPEND ON SPECIFIC NEEDS AND THE

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AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS UNDER COUNTRY AND REGIONAL CEILINGS, BUT IN VIEW OF THE URGENCY OF BOTSWANA'S REQUIREMENTS AND THE NEED TO PREVENT THE EXPIRATION OF THE FISCAL YEAR FROM FORCING CUTS WHICH WOULD DISTORT THE FUNDAMENTAL PURPOSE OF THIS AID, WE SHOULD MOVE NOW TO EXAMINE THIS USE OF OUR FUNDS.

3. AID/W REMAINS COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING THE IBRD-LED RAILROAD CONSORTIUM AS A LONG-RANGE REGIONAL TRANSPORT PROJECT AND PLANS TO ALLOCATE APPROX. DOLS 11 MILLION IN FY 79 FOR POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTION TO IT. HOWEVER, IN OUR JUDGMENT IT IS NOT WISE TO ATTEMPT TO RUSH THIS COMPLEX PROJECT IN ORDER TO MEET DEADLINE FOR OBLIGATION OF FY 78 FUNDS. AT THE SAME TIME, WE ARE SENSITIVE TO THE NEED TO HELP THE GOB MAINTAIN ITS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AND EASE THE ADVERSE PRESSURES CAUSED BY THE CONTINUING CONFLICT IN RHODESIA. A GRANT TO THE GOB FOR TRANSPORT AND/OR RURAL DEVELOPMENT SECTORS APPEARS MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS OF PUTTING JEOPARDIZED FY 78 TRANSPORT FUNDS TO USE. AID/W IS THUS WILLING TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF DIRECT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO THE GOB IF IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT THERE IS A GENUINE NEED AND THAT PROVISION OF US

AID WOULD HELP PREVENT CUTBACKS IN ITS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM OWING TO EXTRAORDINARY EXPENDITURES RELATED TO THE RHODESIAN CONFLICT.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: WHILE WE ARE WILLING TO CONSIDER DIRECT ASSISTANCE AS A MEANS OF INSURING THAT BOTSWANA RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORT PROGRAMS ARE MAINTAINED, A CRITICAL FACTOR WILL BE THE NATURE OF THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THESE PROPOSALS AND THE SPEED WITH WHICH THEY CAN BE PUT INTO ACTION. IN ORDER TO MEET EFFECTIVE DEADLINE OF END OF FISCAL YEAR, IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO PROVIDE GOB'S OFFICIAL REQUEST AND SUPPORTING DATA FOR AID/W CONSIDERATION BY END OF JANUARY. IF USAID'S AND EMBASSY'S ASSESSMENT IS THAT DIRECT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
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TO GOB DEVELOPMENT BUDGET COULD BE JUSTIFIED ON THE BASIS OF SPECIFIC NEED AND APPROPRIATE USES, PLEASE OBTAIN ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DOCUMENTATION ASAP. CHRISTOPER

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